

From Richard Schechner's Notebook 71, November 1984-July 1985

Quelques abréviations :

RW=Robert Wilson

SL=Stage Left (=Cour)

SR=Stage Right (=Jardin)

DSL=Downstage Left (=Avant-scène Cour)

DSC=Downstage Center (=Avant-scène au centre)

DSR=Downstage Right (=Avant-scène Jardin)

US= Upstage

b m= black male

23 Dec. 8pm: Einstein on the Beach

Chorus sings -- it feels like a baroque ensemble. "1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8." Very much of peace. h, no longer here. struggle spirit. bitterness & experience of masses, poor. h, instead a celebration of the powers of: physics, psychology, corporations. As in the baroque age when -- of course there must've been great misery also.

Image: DR: A conch shell. Overhead: a girl w a glass cube open on one end

Slowly upstage left train enters. Lucinda Childs moves forward & back center stage. Man w back to audience "writes" formulae on an imaginary blackboard. Music is pulsating "train" music -- choo choo: 1 2 3 / 1 2 3 4 // 1 2 3 / 1 2 3 4 gamelan like. A silver vertical bar of light cuts down - swim upstage center. Blackout. Repeat -- except that this time of climax a blue "postcard" 20' square of an old fashioned train descends US center. And 2 dancers -- Childs going forward and back -- a 2nd moving in slow motion horizontally from SL. Train gets further in. Above on the right a small girl overlooks scene.

Lots of stage smoke/steam.
V beautiful.

23 Dec, BAM: Einstein on the Beach

The chorus sings -- it sounds like a baroque ensemble. "1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8." Very much of peace. There is no longer here the struggle against the bitterness of experience of the masses of poor. There is instead a celebration of the power that are: physics, psychology, corporations. As in the baroque age when -- of course there must've been great misery also.

DR: A conch shell. Overhead: a girl with a glass cube open on one end.

Slowly upstage left train enters. Lucinda Childs moves forward and back center stage. Man with back to audience "writes" formulae on an imaginary blackboard. Music is pulsating "train" music -- choo choo: 1 2 3 / 1 2 3 4 // 1 2 3 / 1 2 3 4 gamelan like. A silver vertical bar of light cuts down the scrim upstage center. Blackout. Repeat -- except that this time of climax a blue "postcard" 20' square of an old fashioned train descends US center. And 2 dancers -- Childs going forward and back -- a 2nd moving in slow motion horizontally from SL. Train gets further in. Above on the right a small girl overlooks the scene.

Lots of stage smoke/steam

Very beautiful.

At end of 2nd entrance — train driver is visible, smoking a cigarette as he works. Again the vertical stripe of light; blackout.

3rd time.. Train further in.

Childs carries a small clay man's pipe in her left hand

Man w blackboard speaks. "It could be..." Hard to understand. "It could be some —" He begins to sing some of his words. "Crazy Eddie's" ... repeated.

Additive — CF Trisha Brown's Accumulations —
A man reading a newspaper

It is girl above who throws down a few paper airplanes. The streak of light down cyc reminds me of Max Gimblett's paintings.

Has been educated to RW — it all seems very interesting & spellbinding now. In past years I felt often overlong & unbearably boring. It has achieved status of classic. The music I always liked — but even more now.

Train scene ends after 3rd time. 2 cars were seen. Light streak remains. Big interlude of music, next tableau set up.

At the end of the 2nd entrance -- train driver is visible, smoking a cigarette as he works. Again the vertical stripe of light; blackout.

3rd time. Train further in.

Childs carries a small clay man's pipe in her left hand.

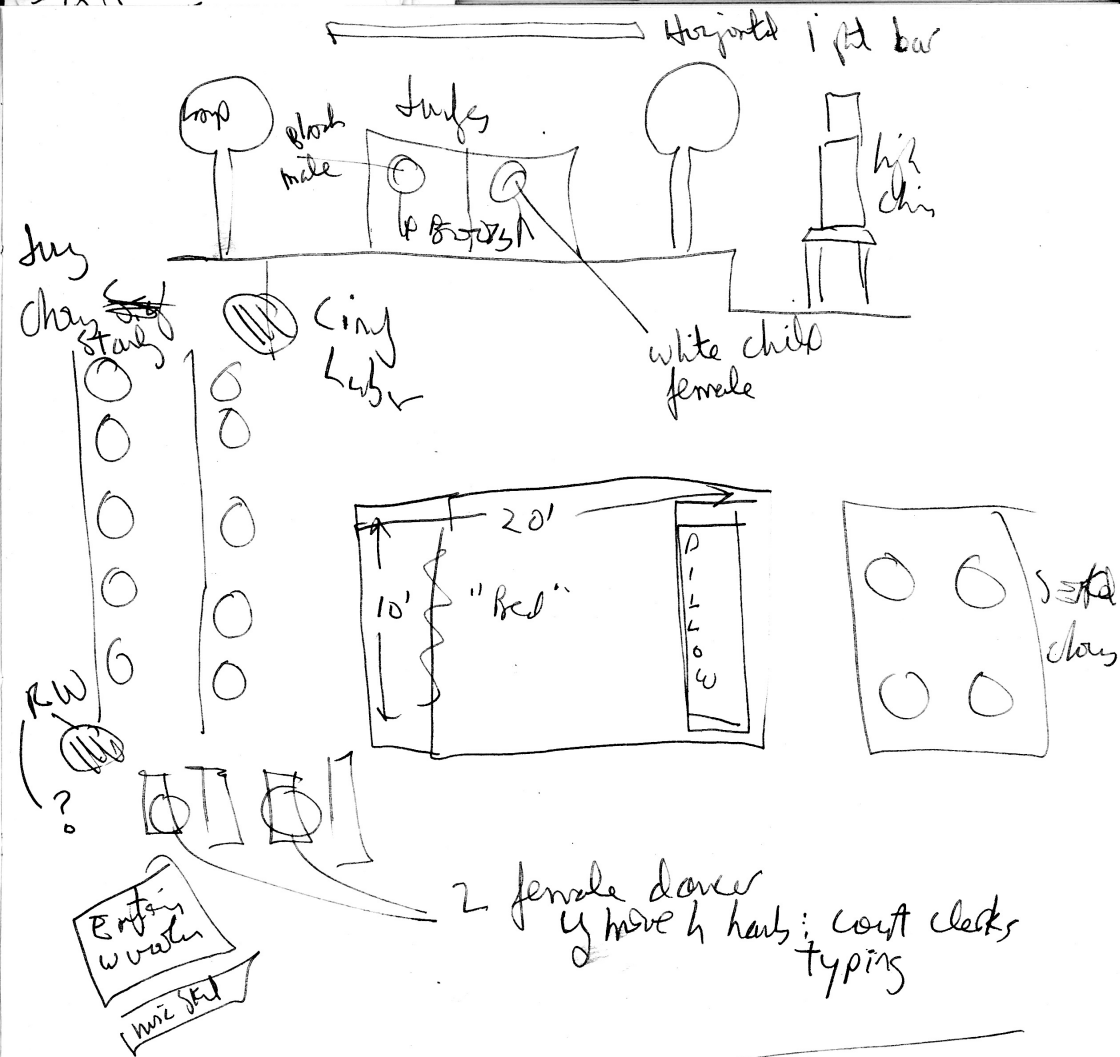
Man with blackboard speaks. "It could be" Hard to understand. "It could be somewhere --" He begins to sing some of his words. "Crazy Eddie's" ... repeated.

Additive -- compare Trisha Brown's Accumulations --
A man reading a newspaper.

It is the girl above who throws down a few paper airplanes. The streak of light down cyc reminds me of Max Gimblett's paintings.

Having been educated to RW -- it all seems very interesting & spellbinding now. In past years: felt often overlong & unbearably boring. It has achieved the status of classic. The music I always liked -- but even more now.

Train scene ends after 3rd time. 2 cars were seen. Light streak remains. During interlude of music, next tableau is set up.



[Drawing of Stage]

After a while Childs sits in witness chair.
 BM Judge: "p (w) common pleas, now in session"
 WF Judge: "p (w) common pleas, now in session"
 Repeated in English, then in French

After a while Childs sits in witness chair.
 B[lack] M[male] Judge: "This court of common
 please is now in session."
 W[hite] F[emale] Judge: "This court of common
 pleas is now in session."

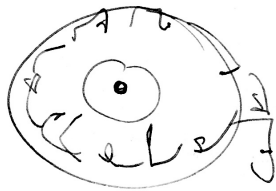
Repeated in English, then in French.

Cindy Lubar reads something about "Mr. Bojangles." 2 flats descend: on SR a plan of, "first sale" Justice at Versailles. On SL: hanging sideways a picture of Versailles room full of people == not a plan but a depiction.

Einstein plays the violin.

Images/sounds are very beautiful -- restful -- but not "socially" cognitive. That is, they do not really directly say anything about Einstein or physics or social life. Higher social level. One more Buddhist. Exactly what this over level is would take a very hard effort on my part to specify. I'll run out of ink first.

A kind of cloud descends -- in front of the flats & behind the judges.



A rotated disk.
It rotates as a clock would be.

The RW figure, dressed in a dark suit. All others (except judges) are in gray pants, white shirt, & suspenders.

Cindy Lubar reads something about "Mr. Bojangles." 2 flats descend: On SR a plan of the "grand sal[on]" of Justice at Versailles. On SL: hanging sideways a picture of Versailles room full of people == not a plan but a depiction.

Einstein plays the violin.

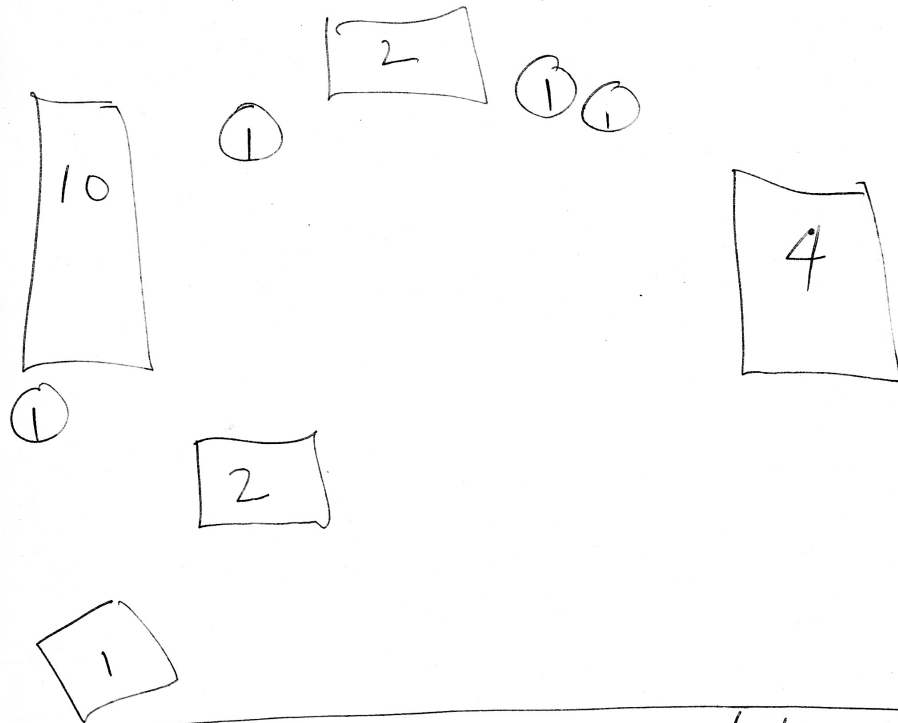
Images/sounds are very beautiful -- restful -- but not "socially" cognitive. That is, they do not really directly say anything about Einstein or physics or social life. They enter at another level. One more Buddhist. Exactly what this over level is would take a very hard effort on my part to specify. I will run out of ink first.

A kind of cloud descends -- in front of the flats & behind the judges.

[drawing of rotated disk] A rotated disk. But rotates as a clock would be.

The RW figure is dressed in a dark suit. All others (except the judges) are in gray pants, white shirt, & suspenders.

24 persons on stage + 5 musicians in pit -
 but it still seems empty. The jury is as one --- etc.



2 female dancers DSR move hands à la Bausch.
 I see here RW's influence on her. Associative
 rather than narrative or even characterological logic.
 A clock, a gyroscope, a compass descend DSL, C, R.

clock

8:03

gyro

compass

24 persons on stage + 5 musicians in pit -- but it
 still seems empty. The jury is as one --- etc.

[drawing of stage picture]

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 Bausch. I see here RW's influence on her.
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 characterological logic.

A clock, a gyroscope, a compass descend DSL, C,
 R.

Clock
 8:03

Gyro

Compass

"Plan of a Bench of Justice in the Grand Salle
of the Palace of Versailles."

Gyroscope slowly moves SL → SR

Dark disc descends & slowly eclipses "clock" behind
Judge's bench.

When eclipse occurs, 2 little lights go on on either
side of dark disc.

All perfs assemble on front edge of stage. They
open their paper bags & take out styrofoam cup &
tiny cracker -- & they eat.

3 exceptions: Einstein w/ phys; RW w/ watch;
a woman DSL only is reading a book, Omar
Pasha

(RW)

(Book
reader)

(E)

Music stops abruptly -- all look at their watches
except RW & book reader.

"Plan of a Bench of Justice in the Grand Salle of the
Palace of Versailles [no close quote]."

Gyroscope slowly moves SL -- [arrow] SR

Dark disc descends & slowly eclipses "clock" behind
Judge's bench.

When eclipse occurs, 2 little lights go on at either side
of the dark disc.

All perfs assemble on the front edge of the stage. They
open their paper bags & take out styrofoam cup and
tiny cracker -- & they eat.

3 exceptions: Einstein only plays; RW only looking at
his watch; a woman DSL only is reading a book, Omar
Pasha [?]

RW

Book reader

Einstein

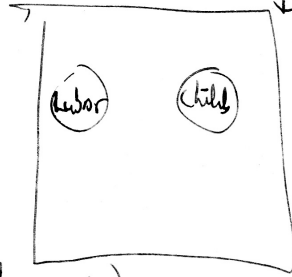
Music stops abruptly -- all look at their watches,
except RW & book reader.

the b m judge tells. story. modest woman y addressed
 meet, woman in Kalamazoo & spoke in favor. woman
 only, world. Then a front scrim & a seated naked woman.
 then curtain -- & return to pre-show ~~stage~~ set up

Einstein
 playing
 sounds like
 Bach.

(At start
 Childs &
 Lubar =
 reversed;
 & h x a a

table in front, END.)



Square >
 light

The b m judge tells the story of the modest woman
 who addressed the meeting of women in Kalamazoo
 & spoke in favor of the women ruling the world.
 Then a front scrim of a seated naked woman. Then
 curtain -- & return to the pre-show set up:

Einstein
 Playing
 sounds like
 Bach

(At start
 Childs &
 Lubar were
 reversed; &
 there was a
 table in front
 of each.)

Childs Lubar

Audience stirs. p, somekil, intermission. 3³⁰

Childs & Lubar -- on h hands & knees -- reciting
 ads of glasses. Ad: NY ~~Opt~~ Ophthalmic Center contact lenses.

Audience stirs. This is some kind of intermission.
 Childs & Lubar -- on their hands and knees -- reciting
 ads of glasses. Ad: NY Ophthalmic Center contact
 lenses.

Act 2:

A leaping spinning dance, v hi energy 1 4 woman / 4 men.

Scene 2: train 7. perspective > lat car, in
 receding perspective.

Repetition -- & accumulation: 2 1. W's chief
 techniques. And in this piece a nostalgia
 1-19th century -- sci, technique etc.

Act 2:

A leaping spinning dance of very hi energy for 4
 women/4 men.

Scene 2: Train from the perspective of the last car, in
 receding perspective.

Repetition --- & accumulation: These are W's chief
 techniques. And in this piece a nostalgia for the 19th
 century: [illegible 4 words] etc.

Act 3

Jail scene. Childs' voice -- about "prematurely air conditioned ... bathing cap, ... reminded of the fact that I was avoiding the beach ... red & yellow & blue ... & I was not tempted to buy one ... prematurely union litoned (?) super market & there were all these aisles & there were these bathing caps that you could buy that had these kind of 4th of July ... on them & they were read ... kind of [no close quotes]

4th of July plumes on were red & yellow & blue.

Repeated over & over.

Laurie Anderson voice.

Who had it 1st? Laurie or Childs/Wilson?

As Childs' Lays on the square SR 2 prisoners move in the cell SL.

Bausch hands DR = "clerk" & court "typing"
Anderson voice: About bathing caps.

Act 3

Jail scene. Childs' voice -- about "prematurely air conditioned ... bathing cap, ... reminded of the fact that I was avoiding the beach ... red & yellow & blue ... & I was not tempted to buy one ... prematurely union litoned (?) super market ^ there were all these aisles & there were these bathing caps that you could buy that had these kind of 4th of July ... on them & they were read ... kind of [no close quotes]

Text slowly unfolds itself.

Repeated over and over.

Laurie Anderson voice.

Who had it 1st? Laurie or Childs/Wilson?

As Childs lays on the square SR 2 prisoners move in the cell SL.

Bausch hands DR were "clerks" of the court "typing."
Anderson voice: About bathing caps.



[Drawing of stage with Jury SL, Childs on Bed in front of Jury, Clerks of the court DSL. Facing them SR Prisoners. Einstein is in the orchestra pit with the orchestra.]

Spectators

- ① When Childs pick up black coat & gun - she reminds me of Patty Hearst & her "transformation" into SLA.
- ② puts on chair a new black coat, stylish black

1. When Childs picks up black coat & gun -- she reminds me of Patty Hearst & her "transformation" into SLA [Symbionese Liberation Army].
2. Puts on her coat, stylish black ----->

Childs = Hearst's progression: society rich girl; revolutionary;
prisoner; freed child "naive".

Hearst = level, US politics: style & context, N
ideology.

After Childs exists, Lubar comes down front &
looks over the things: dress, coat, gun etc.

Now, trial seems like Hearst's trial.

Lubar: ... (p. 124), things on table. ...

So (p. 124) she says, ... So (p. 124) like ...
... So (p. 124) like wh ... bank -- as she takes
gun.

Lubar & Lubar: So (p. 124) like wh ... bank ... robbery
& punishable by 20 yrs in federal prison. ... Mr Bojangles
Mr Bojangles ... Hey Mr Bojangles ... Christopher Knowles ...

How much alike Mark Twain & Einstein look,
when both are old.

Childs is like Hearst's progression: society rich
girl; revolutionary; prisoner; freed child "naive."

Hearst = level, US politics: style & context, N
ideology

After Childs exist, Lubar comes down front &
looks over the things: dress, coat, gun etc. Now
the trial seems like Hearst's trial.

Lubar: ... this about the things on the table. ... So
this could be one of the ones that were ... So this
could be like ... so this could be like wh ... bank --
as she takes the gun.

Louder and louder" "So this could be like wh ...
bank ... robbery is punishable by 20 years in
federal prison. ... Mr Bojangles Mr Bojangles ...
Hey Mr Bojangles ... Christopher Knowles.

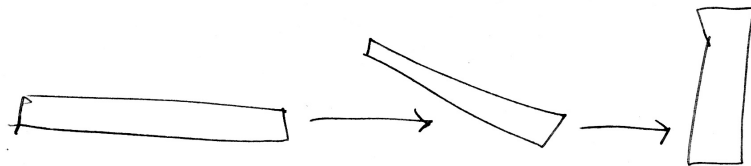
How much alike Mark Twain & Einstein look,
when both were old.

In. reprise, Vigorous dance 1 & a "space ship" ring floats over tm.

The music is most powerful, piece.

Slab 2 end $\equiv$ slab in 2001
2010
nice image; cheap theatre trick; metaphors
We see it, ultimately - a human perspective - 1 (beyond our intelligence).

The return to a mysticism. How do I feel about it?
Like strong aspirin: I regret it, but clearly the species needs it.



A bit phallic, no?

& if for religion - or art as religion, then we're still in it.

As bright incandescent slab achieves full erection, verticality, & sails still higher - a female voice "Ahs" operatically & a tinkling keyboard instrument plays.

In the reprise of vigorous dance for 8 a "spaceship" ring floats over them.

The music is the most forceful of the piece.

Slab at end like slab in 2001
2010

Whatever it is that ultimately - from the human perspective is (beyond our intelligence).

The return of a mysticism. How do I feel about it?
Like strong aspirin: I regret it, but clearly the species needs it.

[Drawing of slab as it moves from horizontal to half-vertical to vertical.]

A bit phallic, no?

& if this is religion -- or art as religion, then we're still in for it.

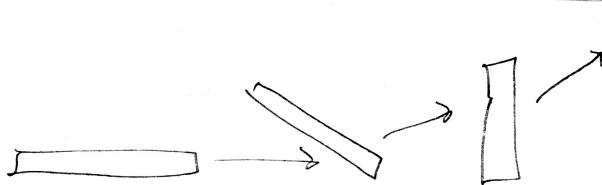
As the bright incandescent slab achieves full erection, verticality, & sails still higher -- a female voice "Ahs" operatically & a tinkling keyboard instrument plays.

if $h_s < b$. final image because.

①. horrible

② it is so awfully conventional & unironic.

I am really repelled
by it. Laughter beyond laughter.



At I & way. h, still
one more scene.

The elevator in front of -
cubicle scene.

The atom bomb scene.

That's & scary.

then nightfall scene - w. approaching bus.

This has to be the final image because

1. the hour is late

2. it is so awfully conventional and

unironic

I am really repelled by it ...
laughter beyond laughter.

[drawing of the slab erecting and then floating
off.]

But I was wrong. There is still one more scene.

The elevator in front of the cubicle scene.

The atom bomb scene.

[unintelligible word] & scary.

Then nightfall scene --- with the approaching bus

Slab
↓
Religion
white
man's

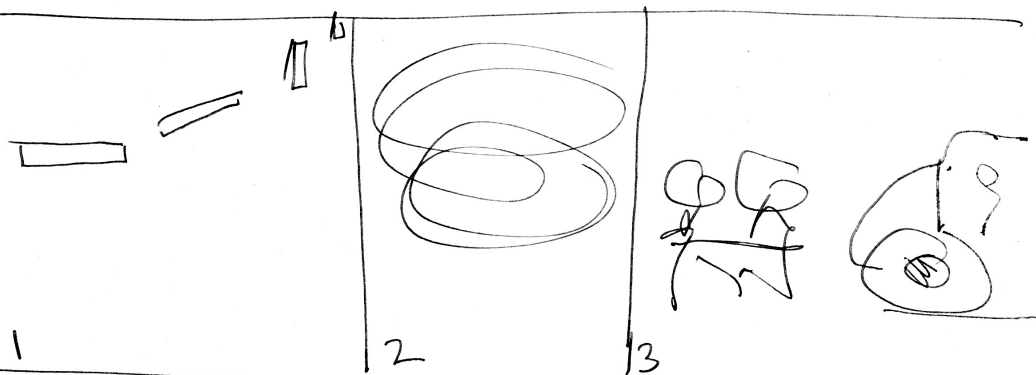


bus
↓
Love
black chair +
2 women

Slab
↓
Religion
white
man's

Atom

bus
↓
Love
black chair
+ 2 women



1
Single female
+ tinkle
harpsichord

2
Heavy duty
megason

3
Chair -
as at end of Bach
Mass

[drawing of the three scenes]

1 [slab
ascending]

2 [atomic
bomb]

3 [approaching
bus]

Single female
+ tinkle
harpsichord

Heavy duty
megason

Closing --
as at end of
Bach Mass